

THE SECRET OF HEALTH

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A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*"I shall yet praise Him who is the health of my countenance and my God."
Psalm 42:11.*

ANOTHER verse in this psalm so attracts me, that, though it is not my text, I cannot pass it by without a moment's notice. In the fifth verse, the psalmist says, "I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance," and then follows the expression of the text, "who is the health of my countenance and my God." God's countenance is our help and He, Himself, is the health of *our* countenance! The best help a man can have in time of trouble is the countenance of God! If he feels that he enjoys the divine love and that he is acceptable with the Lord, he becomes, at once, strong to bear, or dare, or do. Ask the presence of God to be with you, child of God, and you may then descend into a lion's den, traverse a fiery furnace, or pass through the iron gates of death! A look from the Lord is life and strength to His people! So much for the fifth verse. Now, let us weave our text with it. This help of God's countenance usually comes to believers by their obtaining health for their countenances. It may not please God to lessen the burden, but it comes to the same thing if He strengthens the back. He may not recall the soldier from the battle, but if He gives him a greater stomach for the fight, and increased strength for its toils, it may be better, still, for him. "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?" Give a man health in his countenance and he laughs at that which would have crushed him had he been in another mood. There are times when the grasshopper becomes a burden, and there are other seasons, when, with undaunted spirit, we can say, "Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain." Everything depends upon the man's personal condition. For the diseased eyes, beauty does not exist. For the disordered palate, sweetness is no longer to be found. And to a deaf ear, harmony is silent.

Our happiness depends more upon our own personal condition than upon our surroundings. The great thing to be desired by all of us is that we may, in spirit, soul, and body, be whole, that is, to be holy, for *holiness* is, in very truth, wholeness of our entire manhood! Sin is disease. Righteousness is health. We all need to be healed, that being healed, we may be healthy—that receiving the divine restoration, our nature may arrive at perfect soundness. Through the fall and our own sins, we have become the prey of manifold maladies and need the exercise of divine power to bring us back into that sacred sanity of nature in which God first created man—when He made him in His own image and saw, concerning him and the world in which He had placed him, that it was very good. Of our complete manhood's health, I shall speak this morning. And while I speak of it, may the Lord be pleased to make all of us see that *He* is the health of our countenance and our God.

I. Our first remark is one which naturally grows out of the text, though it may seem a very trite one, namely, that PERFECT HEALTH IS A GREAT BLESSING. Do not misunderstand me by narrowing my words in their application. I am not speaking of the health of the body, *alone*, for to say that bodily health is a blessing were but to assert what no one disputes. Man, however, is something more than a body. He is also a living soul. Yes, more—there is in the *regenerate* man, a *triple* nature, consisting of body, soul, and spirit. Even in you, who are unregenerate, there is a *double* nature of body and soul. I would hope you have been born again and have reached the triple nature, and possessed that higher principle which is born of God, but even *you* are not all comprised in mere flesh. And when I speak of your *health*, I mean the health of your entire being. Perfect health lies in the right condition of spirit, soul, and body. Complete health in heaven will be ours when our body has been raised from the dead, incorruptible—our soul has been cleansed from all defilement, our new-born spirit has come to its full development—our entire manhood shall be glorified!

This universal health of our manhood is invaluable, *for it was that which made our first Paradise*. Man was not happy in Eden merely because the fruits were luscious and delicious, as were the odors of the flowers which grew in the garden of delights, but because no disease of sin had tainted any part of his nature. His bodily appetites had not gained predominance over his mental faculties, neither had he suffered any of his mental powers to override the rest, or permitted the pride of knowledge to stay the childlike spirit which adored the great Father. His being was well balanced and all its powers were in a perfect condition. Adam was in all respects such as God would have man to be, for he was such as God had actually made him. As in a perfect machine which comes fresh from the maker's hand, every wheel acts upon its fellow and the whole is obedient to the central mainspring—and so was Adam's nature in complete order. Alas for us that it ever became otherwise!

As perfect health was our first happiness, so it will be our last and eternal happiness, for heaven is not merely streets of gold and harps of melodious music and winged creatures strangely bright—it is perfection realized! The slough of depravity cast off, the soul shall be herself again, and of manhood it shall be said, “His flesh is fresher than a child's, and he has returned to the days of his youth.” Spiritual health, then, was the first Paradise and we can never reach the second except by its recovery. No forgiveness of sin, no imputation of righteousness, no justification by faith, if such could be apart from an *inward* change—could make a man happy so long as he is sick of soul. Health must reign *within*, or a throne in heaven would be a mockery!

Today, a measure of health is essential to our happiness. If any man here burns with the fever of lust, he cannot be a happy man. In the fierce heat of passion, he may *think* himself blessed, but he dares not deny that, in those intervals of chill remorse which alternate with the heat of passion, woe and anguish are his portion! Anger, envy, revenge, covetousness, discontent, pride and self-will are all diseases fatal to happiness. Perhaps some man before me is utterly given up to worldliness and lethargy has seized upon him. And in the deadness of that lethargy he complains of no pain whatever, but finds a happiness in the numbness of spiritual death. May God deliver you from this hideous peace, this horrible stupefaction, for it is not true happiness but the herald of eternal death! Absolute happiness, that which will bear close examination—real joy, peace, felicity—can never come to a man while one part of his nature jars with the other! He must be right with himself. The little universe of our nature cannot sing in harmony till its central sun of faith, its planetary affections, and even those imaginations which are comparable to the comets, are each and all in their fit spheres and orbits. Then, as they all, like the heavens, declare the glory of God, all will be well. We must be spiritually healthy or we cannot be happy.

The want of this health is the cause of a thousand ills. This world we complain of full often, but it were no longer the prison-house of sorrow if it ceased to be the theater of sin. If man were man, as God made him, the earth would soon regain her excellency, and her deserts would blossom as the rose. If men were not *sinners*, neither would they be *sufferers*. Thorns and thistles would be no longer a curse, but would be counted among flowers, if men had not thorns within their bosoms and thistles in their hearts. On the way of holiness, no lion or ravenous beast could go up, for of the perfect man it is written, “You shall be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be in peace with you.” Cast out sin and you have cast out the serpent whose slime has made this world so foul. Cut down this upas tree and numberless griefs and torments will no more drip upon mankind.

We may judge of the value of health when we remember that *it cannot be purchased*. You cannot buy deliverance from bodily disease. What would we not give if we could? We would seek out, at any expense, the physician whose fee is highest, and we would not refuse to fill his hands with gold could he but give us ease. But no, when God chastens, the rod will not be quiet. As for the health of the soul and spirit, the miser's bags, if they were emptied out, could not purchase it for a moment! No, the very fact that he hoped so to win it would be, in itself, a disease, for what are trust in riches and reliance upon self-righteousness but forms of pride, which is one of the most deadly of our sicknesses?

You cannot buy health for your nature! Your tears cannot procure it! Your works, your repentances, your prayers cannot find it apart from God! He is the health of your countenance. Bless Him that He is so. Were it not for this, your whole head would continue sick, and your whole heart faint. There is no balm in Gilead, there is no physician there. God, alone, is the healer of the soul and freely does He bestow what India, with its gems, and California, with its gold, cannot procure.

If we are without this health, *nothing can compensate us for the loss of it*. You, who have been sick, know that nothing can make up for the agony of pain or the misery of inability to move your limbs. Those weary nights and long days of anguish can not be recompensed by gold and silver. So, unless you become right in soul and spirit with your God, nothing can help you. You may put on the garb of religion. You may learn the tones and mannerisms of Christians. You may sing the songs of saints. You may think that you could play the music of angels, but, “You must be born again!” You must be recovered from sin’s mortal malady! You must be purged from the foul leprosy of evil, for you are polluted, and until you are recovered, you cannot come into the tabernacles of the Lord, nor stand in His holy place. Without holiness, which is another word for wholeness or health, no man can see the Lord.

If this health of ours is not found, let us be warned that it will be eternal hell, for what is hell? Is it not consummated sin? What are the fetters of the condemned, but their own tyrant passions? The fires that burn, and yet do not consume, will they not be ungratified desires? The worm that never dies, will it not be a tormenting conscience? The man, himself, is his own hell! True, there may be, over and above this, penalties from the hand of the Lord, for what are we that we should pretend to know the secrets of the dreadful prison? There may be positive inflictions from the divine hand, but without these, there is misery enough in despair and torment abundant in remorse. If a man were taken up to heaven, itself, and were surrounded with all the circumstances which assist the blessed to express their joy, yet there he would burn and there he would gnash his teeth, and there he would weep and wail, if still his breast was cankered with enmity to God and his heart palpitated with fierce and strong passions. Within ourselves must ever be the essential heaven, or the actual hell. There lies the main business, sir. You are sick and must be cured, or you are damned, for your sickness is only the beginning of damnation. Sir, you were born with a cancer in your bosom, which will one day flood your whole nature with its horrible loathsomeness! And then will come the time of your misery! You must be cured, or else a doom awaits you which language cannot describe.

Assuredly, I have said enough to show that manhood’s perfect health is the greatest of blessings, and I proceed to the next point.

II. Our text joyfully asserts, secondly, that GOD IS OUR HEALTH.

“Hope you in God, for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance and my God.” God is our health! He is so in these senses, that, first of all, He is *the originator of health* which once was enjoyed by man. There was, in the primeval days, one perfect man—no, there was one perfect *pair*, upon the face of the earth. And these possessed a total sanity because God, who is, Himself, holy, had made them whole or holy, and they were perfect in their ways from the day they were created till iniquity was found in them. They were made a little lower than the angels, but they wore a glory and honor about them which made all the lower creatures obedient to their command. That beauty of holiness was the work of God who made man upright and caused his countenance to beam with health. He who made the first man pure must make *us* pure, or we shall never be pure.

But again, God is the health of our countenance because *our relation to Him is the test of our health*. Just what you are to God—that you really are! It is good to stand well with your fellow men. To love your neighbor as yourself is right and just. But He who made us has the first claim upon us. Our Creator should, first of all, have the love and loyalty of our hearts. If He is not the chief object of our thoughts, depend upon it, we are wrong. Whatever we may be in our relation to others, we are sadly wrong if we are disarranged towards God. If you do not love God, you do not love Him who is the holiest, the purest and the best. If you do not love God, it is certain that you do not love essential goodness, truth, justice, and purity. You complain that the character of God is so much above you—then how low must you be? You assert that you cannot think of Him as your Father—but we would have you remember that when a child cannot think of its father as its father, its heart must be alienated, indeed. Do you ever judge yourselves in relation to God? Men seldom do, and when they use expressions which concern this relationship, they generally misuse them. I have noted in this place, before, that if we call a man, a *sinner*, he is not offended with us, for that only means that he disobeys the law of God. But if we call him a *criminal*, he is indignant, because that means that he has broken the laws of *man*. Alas, that our relation to man should seem to be so much more important than our connection with God! To set man before God is unrighteous and shows the essential injustice of unrenewed hearts, for when their hearts are set right, men feel that they would sooner a thousand times offend their fellow men than *once* offend their God, so that

you may judge of your spiritual health by your relation to God. Do you love Him? Do you trust Him? Do you speak with Him? Do you pray to Him? Is He your friend? Is He your delight? Is His will your will? Do you take pleasure in that which pleases Him? Does your life run parallel with the life of God? It is well with you if things are so—it is on the way to being well with you if you *desire* to have them so. But if, on the contrary, God's will draws one way and you the other, the Lord cannot be wrong and you are clearly proven to be in an ill case. The Lord is holy. "Holy, holy, holy," say the angels, and if you are not like He is, you are *unholy*—that is, you are not whole, you are not spiritually in health—your nature is diseased. God is our health, then, because our relation to Him is the test of it.

Remember again, that *the Lord is the very model of health*. All perfections meet in Him. In God's nature, no single attribute ever intrudes upon another. You cannot find in God's character any one point of which you can say—"He is this alone, to the exclusion or overshadowing of other excellencies." God is love, but God is also a consuming fire. God is merciful, but God is true. God is great, but God is good. All excellences are in Him in perfection. See whether you are like God then, for if you are not, you are not like the model of health. If the symptoms of your condition differ from the characteristics of God, you are unhealthy, for God is the standard of perfect holiness.

The text intends to teach us that *God must be to each one of us the restorer of our spiritual health*. If ever we recover soundness, He must restore us. The Sun of Righteousness must bring us healing. The heavenly wind of the Holy Spirit must drive away the pestilence of sin. The water of life must work our cure, the plant of renown must yield us balm. Man's malady demands a divine physician. Only omnipotent wisdom can make a man healthy, or keep him so. This body of ours is so complex and contains so many bones, cells, muscles, nerves, tissues, and blood vessels that, perhaps, it is the greatest miracle on the face of the earth that we live, or if there is a greater, it must be that we live at all in health. Dr. Watts well said—

*"Strange that a harp of thousand strings,
Should keep in tune so long."*

But when I think of the *soul*, it is so much more mysterious than the body, that to put a soul into proper conformity to God, and keep it right, would appear to be a greater wonder than anything which can be discovered by the physiologist in the anatomy of the body! O God, You alone made man, and You alone can deliver him from the evils which have unmade him, and bring him back to be what You would have him be. No hand but Yours must venture upon the task. They do but blunder who boast of regenerating with water. Blunder? No, they lie! God, alone, can regenerate a soul, and His Spirit must do it by that same mighty power which raised the Redeemer from the dead! Nothing short of omnipotence at its full can raise us from our natural sickness to spiritual health.

Spiritual health is produced by God's coming to us, for the only medicine for a sick soul is not something *out* of God, but God Himself! He could not cure us till He gave us His Son and His Son could not heal us till He gave us Himself. Today, the food of spiritual health is the flesh and blood of Jesus, and nothing keeps us from relapsing into sin but the in-dwelling of the eternal Spirit! Our health is our God, our God incarnate, our God dwelling in us, our God looking down from the throne of glory, and saying, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be My people." Jehovah Rophi, the Lord that heals you, this is Your name, O Lord, and by it we adore You!

III. But I must pass on to the third matter, namely, that THIS HEALTH HAS VISIBLE SIGNS. "He is the health of my countenance." The health of a man is mainly judged of by his face. Truly, you can tell something of it by his gait, and every limb of the body, more or less, evidences his condition—but the *countenance* is the window of the soul—the mirror which reflects the nature. True sanity towards God, or at any rate, the beginning of it in the work of grace, can be *seen*. It is not a close secret hidden from observation—it displays itself! A notion is abroad that perhaps a man may be saved and not know it. He may be alive unto God *unconsciously*. He may be washed in the blood of Jesus without knowing it, so that he may live without discovering his own salvation and only find it out by the help of a priest as he is dying. There is nothing like that in the Word of God! Nothing of the kind! That may be the version of the Vatican, but it is not the version of the New Jerusalem. Read the Scriptures and you find men talk about, "us who are saved." You find them declaring that, being justified by faith, they have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When the Lord Jesus Christ takes a man in hand to heal him, He makes a difference in his countenance, by which, of course, I do not mean the countenance of the *body* merely, but that countenance which David meant, that part of our nature which is visible to others. The Lord gives outward evidences of His inward work! And what sort of signs are those? He takes away from the countenance of our manhood the blotches of sin. I look into a man's spiritual face and I discover that he is a drunk, that he is a man of lust, that he is a man of anger, that he is a hard, cruel man, a mean, miserly man—these are so many blotches. And when the grace of God enters the heart, it takes away these disfigurements and beautifies the character! When the Lord Jesus begins to heal us, He removes from our countenance the blankness of despair. Did you ever see it? I have seen it in the actual bodily visage and a dreadful sight it is! But oh, when those charming bells are heard to ring, the bells of “free grace and dying love,” and the man knows that his sin is forgiven and that he is accepted in Christ Jesus, then despair flies away! The shadow of the dragon's wing is taken from the face and the dove of peace passes by and casts a brightness as of silver upon the countenance! When the great Physician heals men, He removes the paleness of fear, for men are pale when they dread the wrath to come! And they tremble with fear, lest they die in their sins. Once pardoned that pallor is gone and the ruddiness of confidence comes back to the cheeks! The gloom of sorrow also goes from the man whom Christ makes whole—

*“Why should I sorrow more?
I trust a Savior slain,
And safe beneath His sheltering cross,
Unmoved I shall remain.”*

And when the Lord goes on working the cures of grace, it is wonderful how He removes from the countenance the lines and furrows of need. The lantern jaws of hunger are seen in many who are pining after Christ and grace, and cannot find either. But when Christ comes, He satiates the soul and makes fat the bones—and the countenance of the heart is glad.

Let me tell you, though, I am afraid some Christians do not prove it, that the Lord Jesus smoothes out the wrinkles of care from the foreheads of His patients. When Christians are under the influence of divine grace, they know no care. They cast their care on Him who cares for them! They do the little they can do and leave the rest with their Lord, and all goes well, and their life is peace. O happy man who has been thus healed. “Well,” says one, “I trust I am healed of sin, but I am not so healed as *that*.” Brother, the good Physician is proceeding with His operations, and if you have not yet all the cure, it is your fault and not His, for it is in His power, if you trust Him, to take away sorrow, fear, despair, doubt, and even care—so that you shall say as our hymn puts it—

*“All that remains for me
Is but to love and sing,
And wait until the angels come
To bear me to their King.”*

It will not be long before they will come if you are in that condition! Only bad farmers leave their wheat out in the field too long, but my Lord never did so yet. Whenever His sheaves are ready for the garner, He is sure to reap them. A perfect man is on the threshold of heaven. When you are spiritually healthy and have undergone your spiritual quarantine, and there is no more sickness in you, do you think your Lord will keep you out of heaven? Not He, He is too desirous to have you with Him where He is!

The health which our Lord Jesus works in us is seen in the spiritual countenance in many ways. First, it makes the *eyes bright*. A man full of doubts and fears, or vexed with ambition or love of the world, has no bright transporting hopes. But the man who believes in Jesus has a hope that, when days and years are past, he shall be in heaven where Jesus is. I must confess that sometimes, when I try to realize that hope, my physical eyes grow dim because the tears begin to flow and almost blind me. Shall I, shall I *ever* see His face and cast a crown at His feet? I shall, I know I shall! But oh, it does seem too good to be true! While the physical eyes are thus dimmed, how bright the *spiritual* eyes become with such a hope to cheer them!

Spiritual health imparts a beauty to the entire visage. Think how the spouse describes her beauty. She says, “I am black”—she could not help saying that, for she was sunburned with exposure to the world—but she adds, “I am comely.” Her Lord looked at her in such a way that she felt He could see her comeliness though she could not—

“Though in ourselves denied we are,

*And black as Kedar's tents appear,
Yet, when we put Your beauty on,
Fair as the courts of Solomon."*

There is no more beautiful object in the world to Christ than His own church! What a passage that is in the Song, where the king exclaims, "You are all fair, My love, there is no spot in you." He sees with eyes of love, indeed, who sees such beauty. Yet fair beyond conception will grace make the Christian! Altogether lovely will glory make the Christian! We shall bear neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but be without fault before the throne of God.

What a difference grace makes to the spiritual *forehead* when it works with power. By nature, our forehead is as brass—hard, bold, presumptuous—but see what grace makes it. "Your temples are like a piece of pomegranate within your locks." Now, the pomegranate, when you open it, is red and white, and the Christian's brow is full of the blushes of a sacred shamefacedness. "Within your locks," says the Song, as though concealed with holy fear, but what you did see of her brow was red and white with blushing with bashfulness and holy love in the presence of her Lord. I pray that all of you who are converted in these days may know what holy shamefacedness means. Confidence in Christ is admirable, but not effrontery and self-confidence. I am afraid of those people who are so very sure, so very confident all of a sudden, and yet have never felt the burden of sin. Be ashamed and be confounded, while you lay hold on Christ, for the more He does for you, the less you must think of yourself. You may very accurately measure the reality of your grace by the reality of your self-loathing.

The Bridegroom also describes *the lips* of His Beloved, "Your lips are like a thread of scarlet and your speech is comely." Before her health returned, her lips were livid. Before she had received comfort, they were white with fear. But now, they wear a healthy redness and are lovely to her Lord. How about your lips, beloved friends? Are they praying lips, singing lips, confessing lips? Do you speak well of the Redeemer and rejoice whenever you tell what His love has done for you? Well is it with us when to our Lord our "*cheeks* are comely with rows of jewels, and our neck with chains of gold," while our whole countenance shines with holiness.

When God is our health, our whole countenance becomes bright. According to the words of the Song, "Who is she that looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners." The believer's countenance becomes bright with clearness, as far as he, himself, is concerned—he is saved and he knows it! It becomes fair, as far as others are concerned, for they see the excellence of his character and wonder at it. And then it becomes dazzling to his adversaries, as the sun vanquishes rash gazers by its effulgence. Holiness is to opposers "terrible as an army with banners."

I desire that those of you who have been under the great Physician's hand of late may shine forth and proclaim the power of Jesus. Your Beloved cries, "Let Me see your face, for sweet is your face, and your countenance is comely." If Christ has cured you, why do you conceal His work? I feel inclined to do with you as the watchmen did with the spouse in the Song—"They smote me and took away my veil from me." I would not smite you severely, but I would gladly remove the veil from some of you—that you might be seen, that the church may see you—and the saints may rejoice in what the Savior has done for you. David says, "He is the health of my countenance." He does not say, "the health of my heart, merely"—"the health of my inward parts," though that is true, but "of my countenance." Therefore, if the Lord has done great things for you, proclaim it abroad, and make the streets of Jerusalem ring with grateful song!

IV. The last observation is this. THIS PASSAGE ENTITLES THE MOST SICK SOULS AMONG US TO HOPE. "Hope you in God, for I shall yet praise Him who is the health of my countenance." Look at the source of spiritual health. If David had said, "I shall yet recover, for I have a splendid constitution. My stamina is such that it will throw off this sickness." Such boasting would not encourage you, would it? Because in your case, the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint, how could it? You have no stamina except for evil. The disease has smitten you to the very core and your heart has melted like wax. Then, bless God that your healing does not depend on any constitutional strength in yourself!

Next, notice David does not expect healing from anything he can do. He did not say, "Certain actions of mine will yet recover me of my disease." Not at all. If it were so, you, my friend, would be in despair, for you cannot do anything! What good work can you do? Why, you have smutty fingers, and if you were to try and produce a piece of fair white linen you would blacken it in the weaving of it! You

cannot achieve your own salvation, nor need you do it. The health of David's countenance lay where yours must lie, not in *your* works or merit, but in the salvation of God!

And mark, he does not speak of undergoing a long process. "I shall yet praise Him who is the health of my countenance." Here is nothing about waiting, tarrying, lingering, and loitering, as some preachers seem to make out. No, David understood, as I trust we understand, the doctrine of, "Look unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth." Whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ receives, by that look of faith, the principle of health which will begin at once to work—and will ultimately cast out all spiritual disease. Blessed is it to know that our hope lies in God and not in ourselves!

I want you, just for a moment, especially you who wish to be healed, to think who He is, and what there is in Him which you have to look to as your spiritual health. Sin is your disease and here is *mercy without limit* to meet it. You have done evil in all ways and what is worse, your very nature is evil! But here is God who delights to forgive, infinitely gracious, finding a happiness in passing by transgression and sin—look to Him, then! Here shall all your sins be drowned, for God's love in Christ Jesus is a sea without a bottom, and without a shore. Here is assured healing for your sickness, for infinite mercy cannot be baffled in its design.

Again here is *infinite atonement*, also. God is not only willing to pardon, but He can do it consistently with justice, for His own dear Son has bled and died. When I turn my eyes to the Son of God bleeding upon the cross, so glorious is His sacrifice in my eyes that I conclude that, if there were ten thousand, thousand worlds full of sinners, there must be merit enough in the death of Christ to save them all if God had so willed it! We cannot conceive any boundary to the merit of the dying Son of God. Incarnate Deity smarts beneath the lash of justice, is pierced to the heart, is slain, is laid for three days in the grave! Why, there must be a splendor of power about that majestic sacrifice, illimitable, inconceivable! Come, soul, if this is your healing, no disease can stand against it! Infinite mercy armed with an infinite atonement can accomplish all things! O God, You are, indeed, the health of my countenance! By You, I am brought back from my death in sin.

Then, remember that *divine energy* is ready to work our healing, and omnipotence works all things. "Can these dry bones live?" said one of old, but live they did! The dead have been raised and even at this hour, things impossible with men are possible with God! The Eternal Spirit waits to work His miracles of love even now. No propensity of depraved nature is too strong for the Almighty. Man, have you a lion of anger within you? This Samson can tear that lion as though it were a kid! Have you a host of evil passions within you, and fears strong like the Midianites of old? Behold, this sacred torrent of divine love, mightier than Kishon of old, can sweep them all away! Has Satan, himself, entered you and brought a legion of devils with him? Has hell vomited forth all its spawn to hold a horrid carnival in your nature? There was one out of whom Jesus cast seven devils—no, another out of whom He drove a legion! Come to Jesus, man, for devils *still* tremble at His power! Jesus can chase away the enemy from you. All God's energy waits to heal you. "Seek Him that makes the seven stars and Orion, and turns the shadow of death into the morning, that calls for the waters of the sea, and pours them out upon the earth; the Lord is His name," for nothing can stand against the mighty arm of His irresistible grace.

To complete this I must add there is, in God, who is the health of our countenance, *immutable love*. If God begins to heal you, He will never give up the work till He has achieved it. There is not recorded in the life of Christ a solitary half cure. I read of none into whom the devils returned after Jesus drove them out, nor of any lepers who had the leprosy again. I have not to preach to you a salvation that can be lost and dependent upon your good behavior! Lo, I preach a pardon never to be reversed, acceptance in the Beloved never to be cancelled, adoption which makes you sons forever! Give yourselves up to Jesus and He will give you garments of mercy that will never wear out, treasures of love which neither moth nor rust shall consume, and health which will introduce you into a city in which the inhabitant shall no more say, "I am sick," for the people that dwell therein have been forgiven their iniquity.

Healing by God, Himself, presents a ground of hope to the worst among us and blessed be God, many of us have realized it as David did! Now if we, as honest men, tell you that God in Christ Jesus is the health of our countenance, we trust you will believe us and that you will seek the Lord for yourselves. The healing which God gives in Jesus Christ is available to every sin-sick soul. Whoever you may be, if you are sick, today, God is able and willing to heal you through Jesus Christ His Son! I pray

you, linger not through any fear of His ability or His willingness, but come and welcome, come and welcome! Come right now!

It is of no use my preaching about healing to those who are not sick. Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. But to those who are sick this will be a gladsome message! I would like to put it in such an unmistakable shape that they *must* comprehend it, the Holy Spirit instructing them. You have a deadly disease in your nature, every one of you. In some of you, it has taken a very hideous form, but the disease is at the heart of every one of you, ladies and gentlemen, even the same which festers in the bosom of the harlot and the thief. True, it has come out differently in them. Circumstances have helped to bring it out. Perhaps if you had been in their circumstances, it might have been as foully developed as in them. Now, if today you feel the terrible ravages of this disease, I am glad of it, for it is a hopeful sign. When the high priest examined men who were suspected of being lepers, I can suppose that one would say, “I have a very bad spot on my forehead, but there is just near my breast a piece of clean flesh where there are no white scales. I am right at heart, though bad elsewhere.” “Ah!” the priest would say, “You are unclean and I must put you away.” Another would say, “It is true I have a whiteness on my lips, but if you examine me, you will find half my body quite free from the disease,” “Ah, I must shut you out of the camp,” said the priest. But last of all, there came one who said tremblingly to the priest, “I am leprous altogether, I cannot point to a spot as big as a pin’s head that is clean. I am a leper from the soles of my feet to the crown of my head.” The priest would put his hands on that man and say, “You are clean.” How astonished he must have been!

Be you also astonished, O despairing soul! If you are a sinner and nothing but a sinner, condemned, lost, ruined—and you will admit it and look to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation—you are clean every whit! Whenever we are brought to perfect soul poverty and absolute bankruptcy of spirit so that we turn our purses inside out, and cannot find one rusty farthing left, then Christ and all the treasures of His grace are ours! Oh to be brought down to the lowest depth of self-despair, for that is the door of hope! While your cup is half full, Christ will not pour His wine into it. Now bring your cups and say, “Lord, there is a little good at the bottom, does not that recommend me?” No, no, no! He will never pour in the new wine of the kingdom until you are turned bottom upwards and wiped out as a man wipes a dish! But when you are quite emptied, then He will pour in the stream of His love until it brims the vessel of your nature! The Lord make you to feel sick, even unto death, and then you will find Jesus to be the resurrection and the life.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Psalm 42 and Jeremiah 30:4-17.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—908, 715, 103.

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